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Pamphlet Describing M1918

Stamp Bill Books of the Post
Office Department, September 30,
1870–July 10, 1897

Records of the Post Office Department
Record Group 28

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M1918

STAMP BILL BOOKS OF THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT
SEPTEMBER 30, 1870–JULY 10, 1897

American Philatelic Research Library
and
National Archives and Records Administration
Washington, DC
2004

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“The Stamp Division of the Post Office Department was responsible for the collection of the revenues of the postal service and its financial operations.”—P. 1.

1. United States. Post Office Dept. Stamp Division – Archives – Microform catalogs. 2. Postage stamps – United States – History – Archival resources – Microform catalogs. I. American Philatelic Research Library. II. Title.

INTRODUCTION

On the two rolls of this microfilm publication, M1918, are reproduced the six volumes of Stamp Bill Books among the records of the Third Assistant Postmaster General of the Post Office Department. The Stamp Bill Books include statements of purchases of ordinary postage, commemorative, specimen, postage-due, special delivery, newspaper, and periodical stamps; stamped envelopes; newspaper wrappers; registered-package envelopes; letter-sheet envelopes; and postal cards for the period September 30, 1870–July 10, 1897. These records are part of the Records of the Post Office Department, Record Group (RG) 28.

BACKGROUND

The Stamp Division of the Post Office Department was responsible for the collection of the revenues of the postal service and its financial operations. These duties included supervising the manufacture of adhesive postal stamps, postal cards, stamped envelopes, and newspaper wrappers; of official penalty envelopes; and of registered package envelopes; as well as providing postmasters with supplies of these items; keeping accounts for these supplies; and settling bills of private contractors furnishing the supplies. Supplies of postage stamps, special delivery stamps, stamped envelopes, letter sheet envelopes, postal cards, registered package and other official envelopes furnished to postmasters through the Stamp Division were procured by the Post Office Department through contracts with private contractors.

An act of March 3, 1847, authorized the Postmaster General to prepare postage stamps that, when attached to any letter or packet, would be evidence of the payment of postage. An act of August 31, 1852, authorized the Post Office Department to furnish postmasters with stamped letter envelopes. Postal cards were furnished to postmasters in 1873.

RECORDS DESCRIPTION

Entries in these volumes include the number and denomination of postage stamps printed for ordinary postage stamps, stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers, Post Office and regular package envelopes, postal cards, Post Office and dead letter envelopes, postage due stamps, letter sheet envelopes, and specimen postage stamps. The volumes also include tables showing yearly appropriations and expenditures for fiscal years 1882–97. The volumes also give the date that the bill from the printer of the stamps was approved for payment.

Stamp Bill Book 1 includes entries for September 30, 1870 to December 1875; Bill Book 2, January 1876–December 1879; Bill Book 3, October 1879–December 1883; Bill Book 4, January 1884–December 1888; Bill Book 5, January 1889–March 1893; Bill Book 6, March 1893–June 1897, with an entry for postal cards on July 10,

1897. An annotation on the cover of Book 1 says "This is the First Bill Book Made in this Division."

The reports of postage stamps printed are entered in the volumes chronologically and thereunder either quarterly or monthly. For example, reports on the printing of ordinary postage stamps are entered quarterly from December 31, 1870, through 1879; the reports were issued monthly from January 1880 through June 1897.

The entries in the volumes are annotated to show the date that payment was authorized for production of these supplies and the name of the contractor who supplied the materials. These contractors include the National Bank Note Company, the Continental Bank Note Company, the American Bank Note Company (ordinary postage stamps); George H. Reay, the Plimpton Manufacturing Company, the Morgan Envelope Company, and James Purcell (stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers); Morgan Envelope Company, the American Phototype Company of New York City, Woolworth and Graham of New York, CC Woolworth of New York, Albert Daggett of Birmingham, CT (postal cards); George H. Reay, George F. Nesbitt and Company of New York, Plimpton Manufacturing Company, Morgan Envelope Company (post office and registered package envelopes); Continental Bank Note Company, the American Bank Note Company, and the United States Bureau of Engraving and Printing (newspaper and periodical stamps).

Entries relating to the production of Columbian Stamps for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 include monthly reports of stamps furnished for sale to the public honoring the Columbian Exposition from December 31, 1892, to March 1893 in volume 5 of the Stamp Bill Books. The contractor was the American Bank Note Company. In volume 6 are monthly reports on Columbian postage stamps furnished by the American Bank Note Company from April 30, 1893, through April 30, 1894.

Other records relating to the production of postage stamps are in RG 28, Records of the Post Office Department, and in RG 318, Records of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Funds for this microfilm publication were provided by the American Philatelic Research Library, State College, PA.

ROLL LIST

ROLL VOLUME DATES AND CONTENTS

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|---|---|--|
| 1 | 1 | <p>Sept. 30, 1870 – Dec. 1875</p> <p>Postage stamps; stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers; post office envelopes; postage stamps; dead letter envelopes; registered package envelopes; registered package seals; postal cards; specimen stamps of issues of 1847, 1851, 1861, 1865; other specimen stamps</p> |
| | 2 | <p>Jan. 1876 – Dec. 1879</p> <p>Postal cards; stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers; post office and registered package envelopes; ordinary postal stamps; official postage stamps; newspaper and periodical postage stamps; dead letter envelopes; departmental envelopes; dead letter seals; postage due stamps</p> |
| | 3 | <p>Oct. 1879 – Dec. 1883</p> <p>Specimen postage stamps; specimen postage due stamps; ordinary postage stamps; official postage stamps; stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers; newspaper and periodical stamps; postage due stamps; postal cards; departmental envelopes; post office, dead letter, and registered package envelopes; fiscal year appropriations and expenditures</p> |
| | 4 | <p>Jan. 1884 – Dec. 1888</p> <p>Specimen newspaper stamps; ordinary postage stamps; official postage stamps; special delivery stamps; letter sheet envelopes; specimen stamps; stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers; newspaper and periodical stamps; postage due stamps; postal cards; post office envelopes; departmental envelopes; fiscal year appropriations and expenditures</p> |
| 2 | 5 | <p>Jan. 1889 – Mar. 1893</p> <p>Ordinary postage stamps; special delivery stamps; specimen postage stamps; postage due stamps; newspaper and periodical stamps; stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers; post office envelopes; letter sheet envelopes; postal cards; Columbian postage stamps; fiscal year appropriations and expenditures</p> |
| | 6 | <p>Mar. 1893 – July 10, 1897</p> <p>Ordinary postage stamps; special delivery stamps; Columbian postage stamps; specimen postage stamps; postage due stamps; newspaper and periodical stamps; stamped envelopes and newspaper wrappers; post office official envelopes; Columbian stamped envelopes; letter sheet envelopes; postal cards; fiscal year appropriations and expenditures</p> |